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Beethoven. His face grew pale, then flushed deeply; and the next moment he pressed his way hastily through the crowd, and seized by the arm a retreating figure.

"You shall see me in Vienna," whispered the stranger in his ear.

"Yet a word with you. You shall not escape me thus."

"Auf Wiedersehn!" and shaking off his gras, the stranger disappeared.

No one had observed his entrance; the host knew him not; and though most of the company remarked the composer's singular emotion, none could inform whither the unbidden guest had gone. Beethoven remained abstracted during the rest of the evening.

[CONCLUDED NEXT WEEK.]

MELODY.

A comparison between the present and the past is not always to the advantage of the former. We have gained in many respects, but we have lost in others; and, although the balance is undoubtedly in our favor, the fact that there is anything whatever on the wrong side ought to make us more modest than we are. Roman mortar and Tyrian purple—the secret of both being lost—are representative things, with a tolerably large constituency; and it may be that if we could penetrate the gloom which gathers round the far away past, we should discover that—at least in essential principles—there "is nothing new under the sun." There are those who tell us that everything, both in the material and moral world, is subject to a grand law of flux and reflux, in obedience to which continents appear and disappear, nations rise and fall; and art and science flourish and decay. Without stopping to discuss this general assertion, we may be permitted to point to a phenomenon which seems, in some degree, to justify it.

Not even the most casual student of musical history has failed to be struck by the wonderful melodic wealth of the era which began with Haydn, and ended with the last of the great masters—Mendelssohn. In no similar period, and in connexion with no other art has there been such a prodigality of riches. Musicians there were before, as there have been since, brimful of learning, with the theory of music at their fingers' ends, but the times in which they lived were, by comparison, barren of tune. From them was withheld the supreme qualification without which all accessory acquirements are but as "sounding brass or tinkling cymbal," a body without the breath of life, a living man without the ennobling power of reason. The hundred years ending with the death of the illustrious composer of *Elijah* was the golden age of melody. Its coming none could have foretold more than they could that of the wind which "bloweth where it listeth." In like manner none could have foreseen its departure, all our knowledge amounting to the simple fact that it is gone. It must be admitted, however, that this fact is a somewhat serious one, and deserves all the consideration that can be bestowed on it.

How far melody is a gift and how far an acquirement, it is not necessary to discuss. No one will dispute that it is both to a certain extent. In the degree in which it is the former, consideration can avail us little towards making good deficiencies. "No man

gathereth grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles," or even cultivates thorns and thistles to that end. We are hopelessly dependent upon Providence in the matter, and if Providence elect to withhold supplies, he is most to be envied who can be most resigned. But so far as melody is an acquirement the case is altogether different. Here we enter upon a region where human energy and wisdom come into play, where, also, human indolence and folly can put forth their power, and where the voice of warning may possibly avail.

We have said what few will be hardy enough to dispute, that the golden age of melody has passed. It is scarcely necessary for us to put forward statements of proof, because a cursory glance at the compositions of the present day is all that the most sceptical can require. On every hand we see what Matthew Lock called "the soul of Music" conspicuous by its absence. Of the higher forms of the art we produce little, and that little is marked either by disjointed sketches of tune, or by mere tricks of orchestration without any tune at all. The former is to melody, in its highest development, what the flutterings of an eagle are to the strong, steady flight of the parent bird; the latter is, for the present, beyond the pale of notice. A similar poverty is observable in every other department. Take, for example, the song which each season pours forth in hundreds. How many of them can boast of possessing a distinctive tune? For one that may justly do this, there are scores which can only show pale reflections of familiar phrases, the ghosts of what may have been once real and living melodies. It is a bitter satire upon the musicians of the present day that the only tunes which find instinctive acceptance everywhere, becoming for awhile a part of the nation's life, owe their origin to the nameless people who cater for "nigger" minstrels and music-halls. In rough but vigorous style, these folks display a power which education or the fashion of the age seems to eliminate from all others. Many an artist to whom music has been the study of a life has felt abashed before the street boys' favorite tunes, which, all unpolished though they be, have a character of their own, and are genuine utterances, not echoes flung backwards and forwards till they have come unintelligible and meaningless.

So far as this dearth of melody is a fault and not a misfortune, it behooves us to look seriously for means of amendment. One such means will be found in a return to the style of orchestral writing which Haydn sketched out, and Mozart filled in with consummate skill; a style in which melody was supreme, all the resources of the orchestra being employed either for its development or adornment. But for the Titanic genius of Beethoven, the influence of these earlier masters might never have abated. That mightiest of musicians could sing in strains of unearthly loveliness; but he could do more—he could play upon the orchestra as the wind upon an Eolian harp, making it express every phase of emotion, not so much by help of melody, as by the wonderful suggestiveness of his treatment. It was natural that he should have imitators, and inevitable that they should fail. Yet in this case the most complete failure may escape general detection. The man whose thoughts are too vast for ordinary comprehension, and he

whose words express no thoughts at all, illustrate the oft-quoted meeting of extremes, and it is not surprising, therefore, to find believers in the genius underlying the frequent obscurity of Beethoven ready to assume genius whenever they encounter the obscurity of any one else. Thus encouraged, orchestral rhapsody has become a faith, and every puny musical mortal thinks it his duty to wield the thunderbolts of Jove, and stir up a tempest in the world of sound. Just so long as instrumental coloring usurps the place of melody, so long as it the fashion to smile pityingly upon the pleasant tunefulness of Haydn, or go into raptures over the unmeaning ravings of modern writers, so long shall we have to lament that the "soul of Music" has fled from us.

The case is somewhat similar in music not orchestral. On all hands there is a disposition to supply the place of tune by mechanical resources now at disposal, or to atone for its absence by sensational tricks of style. This must be changed before we can hope to revive past glories. Our composers must give up the transcendental, and be content with the truthful and natural. They must learn that what their predecessors called the "production of Ayre" is their primary business, and that all other things follow after. The lesson may be a bitter one, and the result commonplace, but who would not prefer the natural, if diminutive, size of health to the inflation of disease? We may not see, till the mysterious tide of song shall once more begin to flow, another era like that which closed with the death of Mendelssohn, but, even in the absence of the pre-eminently gifted, much might be done by assiduous cultivation of ordinary powers to keep the divine spirit of melody among us. As a first step to this, however, the delusion that anything whatever can supply its place must be resolutely shaken off.

RUBINSTEIN IN LONDON.

If an immoderate amount of boisterous cacophony is music, then the overture to *Tannhäuser* is music; otherwise not. M. Rubinstein's concerto (his fourth) is even worse. The overture of Herr Wagner has at least a certain intelligible form—a beginning, a middle, and an end; but M. Rubinstein's concerto boasts nothing of the kind. There is no apparent reason why any portion of it should be where it is, instead of where it is not. Of the three movements into which it is divided—*moderato*, *moderato assai*, and *allegro*—the most objectionable is decidedly the last; but from beginning to end the concerto at best sounds like an improvisation, by a not very skillful improvisatore. M. Rubinstein has paid two visits to this country. The first was in 1843, when he was put forth as a boy-prodigy, but stood little chance against a greater prodigy, who came to London in the same year—the gifted and much regretted Charles Filtch. For fourteen years afterwards nothing was heard of M. Rubinstein; but in 1858 he undertook a second professional journey to England. The great promise of his boyhood had scarcely been carried out; and his playing, though marked by extraordinary mechanical facility, was by no means noticeable for any of the refinements indispensable to genuine "virtuosity." Now, nine years later, he has honored the country with

a third appearance; and, if his performance at the last Philharmonic Concert may be accepted as a criterion, he has rather receded than advanced as a pianist. Playing more ferocious (we cannot find an apter phrase) and at the same time more unfinished has seldom been heard. Happily, or unhappily, the concerto was of the same quality as the playing. M. Rubinstein clearly belongs to the school of Abbé Liszt; but he surpasses all the disciples of that gifted though eccentric artist in caricaturing his model.

BY THE BROOK.

How gaily it sparkles by,
How blithely it speeds along,
And sings, as it lifts to the sky,
Its sweetly melodious song.
How it splashes,
And dashes!
And standing there, sweet little sprite!
Is Minnie, vision of light.

The sun plays over her hair,
The breeze, with a tender caress,
Kisses her cheek so fair,
And toys with the folds of her dress.
How it prances,
And dances!
And Minnie, with sparkling eye,
Smiles as it passes by.

The fishes play in the stream,
But stop just to gaze awhile,
And think it is all a dream,
As they sun themselves in her smile.
How they glide,
And slide!
And Minnie she laughs aloud
To the merry little crowd.

I would that I were the air,
Or a fish, for a little while,
That I might play with her hair;
Or bask in the light of her smile.
As a sun-beam
Whose dream
Would be ever the same—
To shine on this dainty, fair little dame.
PALETTEA.

ART MATTERS.

Now that the Autumn is approaching and the streets begin to put on a livelier attire, one looks for the artists in their studios; but as yet few of them have returned from their mountain fastnesses, where they still linger, waiting for the beauties of the American autumn, in whose rich colorings they delight to revel. At the Tenth street building one is almost saddened by the feeling of desolation which pervades the entire edifice;—the studio doors are closed; the artists absent; and the pipes extinguished. Here, however, are two old friends, Gignoux, and Lount Thompson. Gignoux is at work on one of those snow-pictures in which he is so eminently successful. The subject, in the present instance, is one of those gorgeous sunsets which we meet with now and then during the winter season. In the distance stretches a range of snow-clad mountain-peaks; in the foreground a frozen lake, along whose shores we here and there catch a glimpse of lowly cottages; the

ground is covered with snow, while over all are the rich, warm colors of a golden sunset. To say that Mr. Gignoux has treated his subject with consummate artistic power is superfluous—we all know how happy he invariably is in pictures of this class.

Mr. Gignoux has also commenced a large picture of Niagara Falls, with effects of ice and snow, which promises well. He has also on the easel the cartoon of a large picture of Mount Blanc, which for grandeur of span and effort is perfectly magnificent. It is to be hoped that this really great work will shortly be given to the public.

Lount Thompson is hard at work on a bust of W. C. Bryant. Besides this, he has just finished in marble a strongly marked and characteristic bust of J. G. Bennett, as well as an admirable statuette of General Sedgewick, presenting the gallant hero in full fighting costume. Mr. Thompson is always remarkably successful in catching the strong points of character and expression in his sitters; giving us portraits which rise above the mere commonplaces of portraiture and possess an ideality and vigor both delightful and attractive.

Constant Mayer is getting his "Maud Muller" into shape, and it is now an easy task to predict for it a decided success.

Hennessy has just finished a "Twilight," which for strength of color and originality of conception has seldom been surpassed.

There are at Putnam's Gallery two water-colored sketches of Randel which call for more than ordinary mention. In the first, Mr. Randel has succeeded admirably in giving the stormy effect of sky, the down-coming rain and the sunlight forcing its way through the heavy clouds; while the distant village and river are treated with consummate skill. In the second the sun is shining brightly, and all nature looks green and fresh. In both pictures are strong, luminous colors, good drawing and great fidelity to nature.

This same Putnam Gallery will well repay a visit, as Mr. Putnam has succeeded in getting together a collection of thoroughly good pictures. Besides which, it is cosily fitted up, and one can always see there the latest English and American publications on art.

At Schaus' Gallery there is a delightful picture of the German school, by Kets, representing a merry group of women and children getting apples. The effect of sunlight through the trees and the expansion of the different figures are rendered with great grace.

There are also at Schaus' two remarkably clever water-color drawings, by Vibert, a group of Spanish or Italian cobblers; the other by Buckley, a view on the grand canal Venice. In the first we have strongly marked character and great freedom of exe-

cution; and the second, wonderfully brilliant colors and great elaboration of detail. A group of children with a toy theatre, by Seignac, at Schaus', is also well worthy observation.

At Gaupil's they have two pictures by Ziem; one a view of Venice, the other a marine, which will well repay looking at from the delicacy and beauty of the skies, something in which this artist appears to be almost without a rival.

As a general thing the different picture galleries are remarkably devoid of objects of interest just at present, but we are promised great things in the Fall, when the picture buyers shall have returned from their Summer tours, Messrs. Schaus and Knoeder both having visited Europe during the past season, where they have bought up many valuable and interesting pictures.

Errata.—In speaking of one of Mr. Thorpe's pictures last week, through an error of type, the name of *Turner's* was printed instead of *Inness*.

PALETTEA.

MATTERS THEATRIC.

At the theatres this week there is positively nothing in the way of novelty; the fall season is near upon us, and the managers appear to have played their last summer cards, and do but wait to see what the regular season will bring forth.

Mrs. Lander is still playing "Elizabeth" at the French Theatre with increased vigor and artistic finish.

At Wallack's "Little Nell" and "Standing Room Only."

At the New York Theatre "Under the Gaslight" and ditto.

At the Olympic John Brougham makes his farewell bow to-night, to give place to Jefferson and the new management. During Mr. Jefferson's engagement he will produce the last London success, "The Forty Thieves."

At the Broadway Theatre "Caste" is to be withdrawn after this evening, and next week we are to have the muscularly legitimate drama, interpreted by Edwin Forrest.

It is a pleasant task to be able to state that Mr. Florence has written to Robertson, the author of "Caste," offering to pay him whatever he shall consider a just price for the performance of his play at the Broadway Theatre.

Mr. Lester Wallack, who has just returned from Europe, will produce his version of this delightful comedy at the Academy of Music, Brooklyn, next week: thereby getting the start of the Florences, who had announced he same performance for the week after. Sharp practice, after all, is not confined to lawyers.

SHUGGE.